

**Remarks of Rep. Henry A. Waxman  
Public Citizen Lifetime Achievement Award  
2014 Gala at the National Press Club  
May 2014**

It is a great honor to receive Public Citizen's Lifetime Achievement Award.

I'm sorry that I am unable to join you at this evening's Gala. But I'm pleased that today's technology makes it possible for me to convey my sincere thanks for this recognition and add my voice to the celebration of Public Citizen's work to ensure that all citizens are represented in the halls of power.

I would also like to acknowledge Senator Elizabeth Warren, who is rightly being honored for her leadership in fighting corporate greed and defending hard-working American families.

I first ran for office because I believe government can be a force for good in people's lives. I have held this view throughout my career in Congress. We know that special interests have advocates in Washington. It is the poor, the sick, the powerless who need a champion in Congress. And that is what I have strived to be.

And that is why I have been so pleased to have an ally in that fight with Public Citizen. We have worked together to pass laws and create policies to improve public health, public safety, and government transparency and accountability. In the early 1980s, many in Congress were trying to extend the length of drug patents to compensate brand drug manufacturers for the time spent meeting FDA approval requirements. Public Citizen stood with me to ensure we passed balanced legislation that supported both innovation and competition.

That legislation, which has become known as the Hatch-Waxman Act, created the generic drug industry. Today, today generic drugs save patients and the U.S. healthcare system over \$200 billion a year.

Some drug companies tried to exploit a loophole by entering into collusive agreements in which a brand-name manufacture pays a generic manufacturer to stay off the market. When this issue got to the Supreme Court, Public Citizen filed an amicus brief for me on the side of the consumer. The Supreme Court largely agreed with Public Citizen, holding that these agreements should be viewed with great suspicion.

While drugs can be lifesaving, they sometimes can be life destroying. I have worked with Public Citizen to preserve the legal right of patients who believe they have been harmed by a drug. In fact, just this year we have been working together to defend FDA's proposal to hold generic drug manufacturers accountable for failing to warn consumers about new information about drug risks.

I could go on and on. We have worked together to support AIDS research and treatment, to improve auto safety standards, to limit the kinds of health claims that could be made for foods and dietary supplements, and to require greater government transparency.

On many of these issues, we've had tremendous success. But the battle is never over because industry is always looking for new loopholes to exploit, so the fight must go on. And that is why Public Citizen is so essential.

I applaud you for all that you do, and am proud to have been able to work with you on so many important issues.

Thank you again for this honor. And for standing with me as a voice for the millions who so urgently need it.